

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5, legislation that will reduce interest rates for student borrowers.

Now, we all know that the cost of college has gone up every year. In fact, over the last 7 years the cost of a public school education, on average, has increased by 41 percent and at a private school by 7 percent. That is in real dollars.

So, how do lower income and middle income students go to higher education? They do it with Pell Grants. In California we do it with the State grants, but we also do it by borrowing. And so I believe that we should lower the interest costs so that anybody who wants to have a higher education, if you want to go back and get your master's, if your child wants to go and get their B.A., that we should be a partner in investment with them. Investing in our people is the most important thing our country can do to be competitive vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

NO JUSTICE FOR BORDER PATROL

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, today Border Patrol Agents Ramos and José Compean turned themselves in to begin serving their 11- and 12-year prison terms. Now, what was their crime? Shooting a habitual drug smuggler after he evaded law enforcement, attacked one of the agents and threateningly turned to the agent with what appeared to be a gun, and was fleeing back across the border.

Now, how is this justice, Mr. Speaker?

Assistant U.S. Attorney Debra Kanof even went to Mexico to find this drug dealer, brought him to America, paid for his medical treatment in an El Paso hospital with taxpayers' dollars and gave him immunity to testify against the agents.

The unreasonable sentence of these agents undermines the morale and makes all of them question what they are doing, do they have the right to draw their firearm in the course of their duty.

This is an outrage. I urge President Bush to review this draconian prison sentence.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT

(Mr. LOEBSACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I stand before all of you today as an example of what can be achieved if provided the opportunity and resources. I grew up in poverty and relied upon loans and grants to pay for my education. In short, I was able to achieve the American Dream because of legislation similar to the College Student Relief Act.

In America, millions of high school students forego higher education because of the financial barriers created by the ever increasing costs of tuition and fees at our colleges and universities. This situation harms qualified but economically disadvantaged students and endangers our country because the American economy relies on a highly skilled and well educated workforce. As a college professor for the past 24 years, I saw firsthand the financial struggle so many students face.

I call on my colleagues to support H.R. 5 because it is time we provide hope and opportunity to the youth of our country, the youth who want to participate productively in an increasingly globalized economy.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5, the College Student Relief Act.

This legislation will benefit 5½ million students. These students are predominantly from middle class, hard-working American families. Without this act they may not otherwise be able to attend our public institutions.

The generation that came before mine understood the investment in the future. At age 17, when I joined the military to be able to, one, support this country in its defense and, two, further my own career, I was given the GI bill, Pell Grants and the ability to use low interest student loans. Because of that I was able to achieve my dream of becoming a public school teacher.

However, unfortunately, this next generation does not have that same investment, a generation that has never seen the kind of investment that I saw.

The good people of the First District of Minnesota sent me here to change the priorities of this government. They sent me here to look out for the next generation of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, with this legislation the American Dream will be a little more in grasp of this next generation. This is not a theoretical discussion on interest rates. These are the students that were in my classroom, on my football team and in my Guard unit.

THE WAR IN IRAQ

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the most important political and moral issue of the day, the war in Iraq. The war in Iraq costs us dearly in lives, more than 3,000 Americans so far, in dollars, 471 billion by my count; in international prestige by compromising our ability to meet our other foreign policy goals.

President Bush has rejected the sensible recommendations of the Iraq

Study Group and instead chosen an escalation of troops. Rather than sending more brave young Americans to fight in an undefined, impossible mission in an Iraqi civil war, we should be looking for ways to redeploy our troops responsibly.

Representative MURTHA has courageously offered a framework for that redeployment, and the administration would be wise to heed his advice. The American people want to bring home their loved ones who are in harm's way. The Iraqi people want us to leave so that Iraqis can solve their problems.

As former Secretary of State Albright has pointed out, the only ones who want us to stay are those who will leave Iraq when we leave.

Mr. Speaker, Congress should reject the President's last ditch effort to salvage a botched execution of a flawed strategy.

WORKING FOR POSITIVE CHANGE AND A NEW DIRECTION FOR AMERICA

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, today, in a bipartisan embrace, both Republicans and Democrats will continue to work together for positive change and a new direction for America by promoting a truly bipartisan first-100-hour agenda.

People in Appleton and Green Bay, Wisconsin, and all across America, wanted us to come together and begin to solve these problems that we are facing, and we have done just that. Two weeks ago we passed a rules package and a comprehensive ethics reform package supported by margins of 426-0 and 430-1, respectively. I believe we are really beginning to come together.

Fiscally responsible, pay-as-you-go, and real budget reforms were supported by many, many Republicans. Sixty-eight joined in implementing the 9/11 Commission recommendations. Eighty-two Republicans helped to increase the minimum wage, and 36 joined in lowering prescription drug costs for seniors.

Let's continue to work together to help reduce the costs of higher education as well. By working together we really will build a better future for everyone.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

(Mr. MICHAUD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this College Student Relief Act of 2007. This bill will help thousands of students throughout the State of Maine.

Maine has one of the highest high school graduation rates in the country. However, only one out of four Mainers go on to complete college. That is because college costs are rising, and